

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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S/S:A1OTTO

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O 142012Z MAY 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 110060

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: RH, PFOR, UK

SUBJECT: EMBOFF PARTICIPATION IN U.K.-SITHOLE MEETING

REFS: (A) KEOGH/FRIEDMAN TELCON; (B) LONDON 07463

1. WE EXPECT SITHOLE TO AGREE TO THE PRESENCE OF A
US/EMBOFF IN HIS MEETING WITH GRAHAM, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED
FOR MONDAY, MAY 16. HIS MEETING WILL BE THE FIRST UNDER-
TAKEN BY THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP. DEPT WILL APPRECIATE
DETAILED REPORTING OF IT TO GIVE WASHINGTON INDICATION OF
GRAHAM'S STYLE AND TACTICS.

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2. SITHOLE WAS BRIEFED BY EMBASSY ACCRA ON THE NATURE OF
THE US ROLE IN THESE CONSULTATIONS AND SEEMED TO HAVE
CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD OUR POSITION. HOWEVER, IF APPROPRIATE
OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF, EMBOFF SHOULD REPEAT THE
FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) PRESENCE OF EMBOFF INDICATES CLOSE AND CONTINUING

SUPPORT WE INTEND TO PROVIDE BRITISH DURING THIS CONSULTATIVE PHASE AND OUR FIRM COMMITMENT TO ASSIST THE U.K. TO BRING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT TO THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM.

B) WE SEE OUR ROLE IN THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS AS FACILITATING AGREEMENT ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLES AND HELPING THE BRITISH SEEK A REAL BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT.

C) TO THIS END, SECRETARY VANCE HAS APPOINTED STEPHEN LOW, OUR AMBASSADOR TO LUSAKA, TO WORK CLOSELY WITH MR. GRAHAM.

D) THE US DOES NOT WISH TO NEGOTIATE THE DETAILS OF A CONSTITUTION. THIS TASK SHOULD PROPERLY BE LEFT TO THOSE IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED, SUCH AS YOURSELF AND THE U.K.

3. PRIOR TO SITHOLE MEETING, EMBOFF SHOULD SEEK TO EXPLAIN TO GRAHAM THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED DRAFT OF BRITISH TACTICS PAPER (ENTITLED, RHODESIA: THE HANDLING OF CONSULTATIONS ON A STRATEGY FOR AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE, REFTEL B) AND THAT AMBASSADOR LOW WILL DISCUSS THIS PAPER WITH GRAHAM IN LUSAKA. EMBOFF SHOULD NOTE THAT WE HAVE SOME MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE IDEA SUGGESTED IN THIS PAPER OF HANDING THE NATIONALISTS A QUESTIONNAIRE AND ASKING FOR THEIR WRITTEN VIEWS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE TACTICS PAPER ITSELF ONLY PROPOSES THIS IN A TENTATIVE MANNER BUT THAT, IN ANY EVENT, WE WOULD PREFER NO QUESTIONNAIRE BE HANDED OVER DURING THE SITHOLE MEETING.

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4. EMBOFF SHOULD FEEL FREE TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE CONVERSATION WITH SITHOLE WHICH WE ASSUME WILL BE PRIMARILY EXPLORATORY IN NATURE. HOWEVER, EMBOFF SHOULD TAKE CARE TO DEFER TO GRAHAM'S LEAD SO AS NOT TO ENCOURAGE EITHER BRITISH OR SITHOLE TO MISCONSTRUE OUR ROLE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. CHRISTOPHER

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